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Occupational Employment and Wages in Huntsville – May 2014

Workers in the Huntsville Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of $24.87 in May 2014, about 10 percent above the nationwide average of $22.71, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were higher than their respective national averages in 4 of the 22 major occupational groups, including architecture and engineering; and business and financial operations. Thirteen groups had significantly lower wages than their respective national averages, including construction and extraction; sales and related, and education, training, and library.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 3 of the 22 occupational groups: architecture and engineering; computer and mathematical; and business and financial operations. Conversely, 15 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including office and administrative support; transportation and material moving; and education, training, and library. (See table A and box note at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Huntsville Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Huntsville	United States	Huntsville	Percent difference [1]
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%	$22.71	$24.87	10
Management	5.0	4.4*	54.08	58.70*	9
Business and financial operations	5.1	7.5*	34.81	39.59*	14
Computer and mathematical	2.8	6.5*	40.37	42.81*	6
Architecture and engineering	1.8	8.3*	39.19	45.95*	17
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.7*	33.69	35.75	6
Community and social services	1.4	0.6*	21.79	20.63*	-5
Legal	0.8	0.3*	48.61	49.47	2
Education, training, and library	6.2	4.6*	25.10	21.56*	-14
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	1.1*	26.82	24.16	-10
Healthcare practitioner and technical	5.8	5.5*	36.54	34.11*	-7
Healthcare support	2.9	2.3*	13.86	12.52*	-10
Protective service	2.4	1.7*	21.14	18.68*	-12
Food preparation and serving related	9.1	7.8*	10.57	9.71*	-8
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	3.2	12.68	10.60*	-16
Personal care and service	3.1	2.3*	12.01	10.37*	-14
Sales and related	10.5	10.9	18.59	15.53*	-16
Office and administrative support	16.0	13.3*	17.08	15.82*	-7
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	[2]*	12.09	13.19	9
Construction and extraction	3.9	3.2*	22.40	18.42*	-18
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.8	21.74	20.58*	-5

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Huntsville Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Huntsville	United States	Huntsville	Percent difference (1)
Production	6.6	7.1	17.06	17.25	1
Transportation and material moving	6.8	4.9*	16.57	14.55*	-12

Footnotes:
(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Huntsville is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.
(2) Indicates a value of less than 0.05 percent
* The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group—architecture and engineering—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Huntsville had 17,390 jobs in architecture and engineering, accounting for 8.3 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 1.8-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was $45.95, significantly above the national wage of $39.19.

Some of the largest detailed occupations within the architecture and engineering group included aerospace engineers (3,040), electrical engineers (2,150), and electrical and electronics engineering technicians (1,220). Among the higher paying jobs were computer hardware engineers and aerospace engineers, with mean hourly wages of $52.89 and $52.31, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were electrical and electronics engineering technicians ($26.79) and industrial engineering technicians ($27.24). (Detailed occupational data for architecture and engineering are presented in table 1; for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/2014/may/oes_26620.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See table 1.) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the Huntsville Metropolitan Statistical Area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the architecture and engineering group. For instance, aerospace engineers were employed at 28.5 times the national rate in Huntsville, and computer hardware engineers, at 8.9 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, civil engineers had a location quotient of 0.8 in Huntsville, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Alabama Department of Labor.

Note

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands are also surveyed, but their data are not included in the national estimates. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year. May 2014 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2014, November 2013, May 2013, November 2012, May 2012, and November 2011. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 74.3 percent based on establishments and 70.5 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 57.1 percent of total national employment. (Response rates are slightly lower for these estimates due to the federal shutdown in October 2013.) The sample in the Huntsville Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,943 establishments with a response rate of 78 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and 821 detailed occupations for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas. In addition, employment and wage estimates for 94 minor groups and 458 broad occupations are available in the national data. OES data by state and metropolitan/nonmetropolitan area are available from www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcst.htm and www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcma.htm, respectively.

The May 2014 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Huntsville, Ala. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Limestone and Madison Counties.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southeast. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/2014/may/methods_statement.pdf.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 800-877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Huntsville Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2014

Occupation [1]	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level [2]	Location quotient [3]	Hourly	Annual [4]
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	17,390	4.7	$45.95	$95,570
Architects, Except Landscape and Naval	100	0.7	38.23	79,510
Cartographers and Photogrammetrists	40	2.0	31.40	65,320
Surveyors	70	1.1	27.84	57,910
Aerospace Engineers	3,040	28.5	52.31	108,800
Chemical Engineers	230	4.5	42.99	89,410
Civil Engineers	330	0.8	36.91	76,770
Computer Hardware Engineers	1,040	8.9	52.89	110,000
Electrical Engineers	2,150	8.0	47.11	97,990
Electronics Engineers, Except Computer	1,180	5.7	50.07	104,150
Environmental Engineers	160	2.0	43.05	89,550
Health and Safety Engineers, Except Mining Safety Engineers and Inspectors	170	4.6	50.40	104,830
Industrial Engineers	1,140	3.1	44.57	92,700
Materials Engineers	210	5.5	51.31	106,720
Mechanical Engineers	1,140	2.7	43.72	90,930
Nuclear Engineers	70	2.6	[5]	[5]
Engineers, All Other	3,240	16.9	54.46	113,280
Architectural and Civil Drafters	70	0.5	24.85	51,690
Electrical and Electronics Drafters	240	5.4	35.60	74,060
Mechanical Drafters	160	1.6	32.97	68,580
Aerospace Engineering and Operations Technicians	150	8.5	29.27	60,880
Civil Engineering Technicians	[5]	[5]	15.89	33,040
Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians	1,220	5.8	26.79	55,720
Electro-Mechanical Technicians	30	1.5	26.37	54,850
Environmental Engineering Technicians	110	3.9	25.83	53,720
Industrial Engineering Technicians	190	1.9	27.24	56,670
Mechanical Engineering Technicians	260	3.5	25.90	53,860
Engineering Technicians, Except Drafters, All Other	350	3.3	33.45	69,570
Surveying and Mapping Technicians	80	1.0	18.40	38,270

Footnotes:
(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in Huntsville, AL, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_26620.htm
(2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.
(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.
(4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a 'year-round, full-time' hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.
(5) Estimate not released.